

Wednesday, January 18, 2012
Grace Episcopal Church
Scripture 202: Introduction to the Bible
Session 14: Wisdom Literature

Book of Job

Fant, Chapter 13

Best loved classics of Western literature. Who is the author? GOK

Simple structure:

- Prologue = chapters 1 & 2
- Long poem = 3:1 – 42:6
- Epilogue = 42:7 – 17

Job is rich, blessed by God with wealth and 10 children. His faith is put to the test when “Satan” (heavenly court) is given by God permission to wreck his life to see if Job will curse God. He holds onto his faith despite his wife and “friends”. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar give him advice representing the orthodoxy of Hebrew faith. What is the answer to the question: “Why do bad things happen to good people?” (Takes whining to a fine art.)

Divine-Human Encounter

1. God’s transcendence vs. humanity’s finite nature
2. God’s apartness creates anxiety about meaning
3. Closed-minded orthodoxy of rewards and punishments is limited and wrong.
4. Job seeks a mediator, a redeemer but never finds one
5. Skeptical review of the orthodox faith

Book Outline

Chapter	Section	Comments
1	Prose Introduction	Job upright, blameless, rich, party animals, Job offers proper burnt offerings Heavenly court gathers – Satan says Job will abandon God. God lets S have way. Job lose property and children.
2		God says Job is still faithful. Satan says give him illness and that will change. Wife = why are you still loyal to God? Job friends show up
3	J wants death	Job curses the day he was born v11 “Why did I not die at birth ...”
4	Eliphaz & Job dialogue	First Cycle of poems – Job has sinned – “As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow

		trouble reap the same, By the breath of God they perish” vs 8-9 Can mortals be righteous before God? Vs 17
5		Job is corrected by God; God is just and will reward
6		Job: My complaint is just. “O that I might have my request and that God would grant my desire.” vs 8 Make me understand how I have done wrong
7		Do not human beings have a hard service on earth, and are not days like the days of a laborer? Vs1 Therefore I will not restrain my mouth.
8	Bildad and Job dialogue	B: REPENT! Your children were delivered to judgment for their transgressions. “God will not reject a blameless person” v20
9		J: There is no mediator, he passes me and I don’t see him v11. Though I am innocent I can not answer him; I do not believe that he would listen to my voice. V15& 16
10		J: I loathe my life; I will give free utterance to my complaint. You created me, why won’t you save me?
11	Zophar and Job dialogue	Z: J’s guilt deserves punishment.
12		J: I am a laughing stock to my friends. God deprives humanity of voice.
13		J: I would speak to the Almighty and argue my case. As for you, you whitewash with lies, all of you are worthless physicians. Prayer: Why do you hide your face from me?
14		J: I am but a mortal comes up like a flower and withers like a shadow and does not last.
15	Eliphaz & Job dialogue	Second Cycle of poems E: Job undermines religion. But you are doing away with the fear of God, and hindering meditation before God. How can God trust corruptible humans?
16		Job reaffirms his innocence. “I was at ease and he broke me in two; he seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces ...” vs 12
17		Job prays for relief. My spirit is broken, my days are extinct, the grave is ready for me.
18	Bildad and Job dialogue	B: the wicked will be consumed
19		J: I know my redeemer lives
20	Zophar and Job	Z: Wickedness receives just retribution

21	dialogue	J: Why do the wicked live on, reach old age, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, and no rod of God is upon them.
22	Eliphaz & Job dialogue	Third Cycle of poems E: Job's wickedness is great. Return to the Lord.
23		J: My complaint is bitter, where is God? I am faint of heart
24		J: Why is there violence on the earth? Why is the sinner not punished?
25	Bildad and Job dialogue	B: How can a mortal be righteous before God? "how much less a mortal, who is a maggot, and a human being, who is a worm."
26		J: God's Majesty is unsearchable.
27		J: God show mercy???
28	Hymnic interlude	Where is wisdom found? Mortals do not know the way to it, it is not found in the land of the living.
29	Job's Final Speech	J finishes his defense.
30		But they make sport of me. I am nothing before humankind.
31		If I(list of actions) . I have done nothing wrong.
32	Elihu speeches	Angry at J's friends because they have found no answer, they have declared J wrong.
33		God is greater than any mortal. Is redeemed by God. God brings souls from the Pit.
34		God will not do wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice.
35		E: condemns self-righteousness
36		E: Surely God is mighty and does not despise any, he is mighty in strength and understanding. He opens their ears to instruction and commands that they return from iniquity.
37		E: God is majestic in his love and rule
38	God's Speech and Job's submission	God: Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tells of acts of creation and are you Job commanding them?
39		God: continues. Mountain goats, donkeys, wild ox, ostrich, horse, hawk
40		God: Anyone who argues with God must respond. Job I have spoken once. God: Gird up

		your loins like a man? How are you like God?
41		Can you draw out the Leviathan with a fishhook?
42:6		I have uttered what I did not understand, ... I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.
42: 7 -17	Prose conclusion	Lord: My wrath is kindled against your 3 friends. Offer a sacrifice to deal with your folly. The LORD restores to Job fortunes by twice, had 10 children, he lived 140 years and saw 4 generations. And he died full days.